

Botanists

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2-4 players, 30-60 minutes (about 15min/player)

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In Botanists, players tend a small area of land to grow flowers, which they then hope to sell. As Botanists, each of the players has three small plots of land dedicated to growing the most popular flowers among their usual clients. However, all players obtain the seeds to those flowers from the same supplier, and because not all flowers are equally popular, the supplier only sells the seeds in bundles, on top of that, other Botanists might attempt to snatch certain seeds away from under your nose!

Components:

- 1 Main Board
- 5 Player Boards
- 5 Player Tokens (with 1 standee each)
- 5 Score Counters
- 125 Flower Tiles
- 76 Market Cards
- 82 Order Cards
- 1 Cloth Bag

Set-up

Place the *main board* (1) in the centre of the table. This represents the *market* (2) from where players will obtain the seeds for them to grow into flowers. Now place all the 145 *flower tiles* (3) in the bag and give them a good shuffle. Give each player one player board (4)*, the corresponding *player token* and *score counter*: you can freely choose the boards or just randomly deal one to each player. Place your *score counters* on 0 on the score track of the main board.

*NOTE: There are five boards but the game only plays up to four: this is for variety, since each board is strong in one particular colour, but has another colour entirely absent. Each board is therefore unique in how bonus actions can be used.

Shuffle the *market cards* (5) face down and deal two cards to each player. Players keep these hidden from their opponents. The remaining deck is the draw deck: place it on the designated spot on the main board face down (6).

Next, shuffle the *order cards* (7), and reveal the top three, placing them on the designated places on the main board (8).

Then, deal one *order card* to each player: these are called *personal orders*, and are placed face up on the player board. If in play, deal a second personal order to the blue player (that's the one with 6 blue wooden signs on their land). The remaining cards make up the draw deck. Place it on the designated spot on the main board face down (9).

Finally, randomly take out 25 tiles from the bag, one at a time. Place each in turn face up (showing the vivid flower rather than the withered one on the backside) into the Market, beginning with the top left space from where you are sitting, filling the market left to right, row by row until all spaces contain a tile. When you are finished, you will have a grid of 5x5 tiles on the board. From now on,

whenever tiles are taken from the Market, it is refilled back to 25 tiles before the next player takes their turn, by randomly adding new tiles from the bag.

Randomly choose one player to be the starting player.

You are ready to play.

How to play

Each player board has spaces for fifteen flower tiles. The spaces are organized into three columns, representing the three plots of land. Players will start filling the spaces in the first (left most) column from top to bottom. Then the second (middle) column from top to bottom, and finally the third (right most) also in the same manner. After every fifth turn (so turns 5, 10 and 15), players will score points and in this way determine the winner by the end of the game.

On your turn, you will perform one of two possible actions. Most of the times, you will be collecting new flower tiles from the Market, but normally, with every purchase only one of the flower tiles will be really useful to you. All other tiles may be useful depending on the current orders available on the board or your personal orders. At the end of each of the three scoring phases, if you have any leftover flowers, they will wither and you will lose points. The tiles you collect will depend on the *market card* that you choose to play, as well as the current location of your player token.

Each turn you have a choice between purchasing flower tiles, or tending your marginal land:

Purchasing flowers tiles

1. **Movement:** You move your *token* inside the market from flower tile to flower tile. When you start your turn, you must move your player token one or two spaces in any direction (diagonally and/or orthogonally). Movement is compulsory and your token may not end on the same tile you started the turn on. You may not move onto or through a tile that is occupied by another player's pawn. Should you find yourself in the very extreme situation of being blocked by your opponents (only possible in a 4 player game and if you are located on a corner tile) then you can move your pawn onto any of the other three corner tiles (this counts as the first move of your movement) and continue from there. On their very first turn, players may freely choose where to enter the Market from. You have to start your movement on one of the outermost tiles.
2. **Play a Market card:** After moving you must play one market card. The card that you play will determine which tiles you have to collect. The Market card shows a shape made of four boxes. One of the boxes is highlighted and represents your token's position within that shape. You are **not allowed** to rotate the card to change the shape's orientation. Also, the orientation of the shape always applies from your point of view in relation to the board. Place the card face up in front of you so all other players can see it, and then use your player token as reference on the grid to help you collect the correct tiles. This helps other players to confirm that you are collecting the right tiles. **IMPORTANT:** if another player is on a tile within the shape shown on the card you just played, then you do not collect the tile that player is on. If several players are within the shape, they all block the respective tiles. However you **do collect** the tile you're on. **ALSO:** when playing a Market card, its shape has to be "played within" the market limits. That is to say that you cannot play a card if the location you're currently on, would make any of the boxes in the shape "fall off" the market. Place the card you've played in the discard pile on the main board.
3. **Assign tiles:** Now that you have collected 1 to 4 tiles, one of the flowers you collected this turn must be planted onto your land's next available space (top to bottom of the column you are currently playing on). The tile that you choose to plant, does not have to match the requirement of that space (indicated by colour of the wooden sign), if it does, you can

choose to place it face up or face down. If face up, nothing happens, if face down or if the tile you chose doesn't match (in which case you also place it face-down), you immediately trigger a *Bonus Action* (see Bonus Actions below). After that, place the remaining tiles in your marginal land on your board. These are the tiles you will try to fulfil open orders with, referred to as *leftover flowers*.

4. Bonus Action: If you triggered a Bonus Action in the previous step (because you played a flower tile with the withered side up onto your land), you now may (but don't have to) perform it. If you do, you have to do it immediately. If the bonus action allows you to place an order card onto your board, immediately refill the open orders so there are 3 cards. If it allows you to move your player token, you can also place it on a space in the market that hasn't got a flower (because you just collected it). For detailed description of the bonus actions, please refer to the section "bonus actions".
5. Fulfil orders: Check whether any of your leftover flowers can be used to fulfil any of the orders currently available. If so, you may now fulfil it. Take that order card and show everybody that you have got the required flowers. Return those flowers to the bag and place the fulfilled order face down on your board. Immediately draw a new card from the order deck and refill the current open orders. Each turn you are allowed to fulfil at most one order from the open orders and at most one from your personal orders, if you have any. So you can never fulfil more than two orders each turn
6. Draw: now that you have assigned your tiles, draw a new Market card so that you again have a hand of two cards.
7. Refill the market: randomly take out one Flower Tile at a time from the bag refilling the Market left to right and top to bottom.

Tending your marginal land:

1. You do not move your token.
2. Take any one of the leftover flowers on your marginal land and place it **face down** onto the next available space of the current plot of land, it doesn't matter whether the colour matches or not. In so doing, you trigger the Bonus Action associated with that space and immediately use it (if you want to and as per rules above: "Purchasing Flowers" – 4).
3. You now may (but do not have to) discard any or all open orders and redraw that many cards.
4. You may (but don't have to) draw 2 Market cards, and then discard your hand back down to 2.
5. If you still have any leftover flowers, you may fulfil one order from the open market and/or one personal order. If you do, immediately **refill the open orders**.

IMPORTANT: If you currently have got no leftover flowers, you cannot tend your marginal land.

Whether you purchased flowers or tended your marginal land, your turn is now over and it is the next player's turn. Play proceeds in clockwise order this way.

Scoring

Whenever all players have completed their fifth turn, a scoring phase takes place. Resolve the scoring phase as follows (keep track of scores on the Victory Point Track):

1. Check how many orders you have fulfilled over the course of the five turns. Each order is worth 5 points. (It doesn't matter how big or small the order is.)
2. Check whether you have got any leftover flowers in your marginal land: if you don't, you score 7 bonus points.
3. Any leftover flowers are worth -2 points each.

4. If you managed to fill all the boxes of the current column correctly (no flipped over tiles), you score 2 bonus points in the first, 3 in the second and 5 in the last scoring phase. If you have 1 or more face down tile in the current column, you get no bonus points.
5. All tiles on your columns remain there until the end of the game. If you have any leftover flowers, you may (but don't have to) keep up to 2 of them, the rest withers and is returned to the bag.
6. All players discard all of the order cards they completed. Place them in the discard pile on the main board.
7. The player furthest behind on the Victory Point Track chooses who goes first in the next round (that may be themselves). In case of a tie, the player sitting furthest away in turn order from the leading player gets to choose.

Follow these same steps in the scoring phases after turn ten and again after turn fifteen.

Important note: Any personal orders (be it the one you have been dealt at the start of the game or that you obtained from a bonus action) are kept until you have fulfilled it on any future turn. Whenever you do fulfil it, just add it to the other completed orders and discard them after the scoring phase. These orders too are worth 5 points each.

Play will proceed this way until the third scoring phase is complete. After that, you will check for end-game bonuses and penalties.

End-game Scoring

a. Use the 6 withered penalty tokens with the main board's penalty track to determine how many points you will lose. For each withered flower (face down tiles) on your land, use one token to cover the left most empty box on the penalty track, once you covered a box for each withered flower you got, the next unoccupied box will show you how many points you lose:

In summary:

1. 1 withered flower = -1 point
2. 2 tiles = -3 points
3. 3 tiles = -6 points
4. 4 tiles = -10 points
5. 5 tiles = -15 points
6. 6 tiles = -21 points
7. And so on... -28, -36, etc. (there are no more tiles as any more penalty points means you're probably not playing the best strategy so send us an e-mail if you need help or clarifications ;)

b. If you have any unfulfilled personal orders on your board, you lose 5 points for each of those.

The player furthest ahead on the Victory Point Track is the best Botanist of the season.

Bonus actions:

Players never have to use Bonus Actions. If triggered their use is optional, however, if they do choose to use them, they have to do so immediately on triggering them.

- +3 Points (immediately advance your score marker by 3 points on the Victory Point Track)

- Swap one of your leftover flowers with one flower from the market, this can be a tile that your, or another player's token is standing on.
- Swap one of your leftover flowers with another leftover flower from a player of your choice, you choose both flowers.
- Move your token onto any Market space. You cannot place it on a space occupied by another player's token, but you can place it on a space that hasn't been refilled yet)
- Take an order card from the open orders and place it face up on your player board as a personal order. If you don't like any of them, draw the top face down order from the draw deck instead. Note that whilst there is space only for two personal orders, you are allowed to have more than two.

Tip: In a 4 player game it is possible that you might collect only a single tile. This is a very useful technique that can be very helpful, so look out for opportunities that allow you to take advantage of your opponents' locations on the board (sometimes it can also be a problem though, as they might be blocking tiles you'd actually want). This changes with 3 and even more with 2 players, as there will be less interference from other players. So the with 2 players, I might have a harder time with the leftover flowers, but don't worry, your opponent will too. Whilst with 2 players you should still try to keep penalties from leftover flowers as low as possible, they will be a lot more common than in a 3 or 4 player game ;)